

GUIDELINES FOR THE FUTURE

In view of the experiences in Weizhou, a more cautious attitude towards future development plans or strategies for off-farm employment should be considered, especially regarding the future promotion of different types of activity.

As for the current leading activities, apples and S-peppers should be allowed to grow but only up to a certain scale, so that the effect on the ecology and environment is minimised. Construction materials' firms should be improved and emphasis should be placed on producing quality and on marketing development, at the same time maintaining the current production capacity. Appropriate and economical environmental safeguards also need to be built-up in construction materials' industries, e.g., cement. It is proper to keep livestock at the current level without further expansion.

A number of other potential activities could be promoted in future.

1. Production of Chinese cabbages for supply to Chengdu City in autumn, a period of shortage for vegetable supplies.
2. Improvement of the road system and development of individual and integrated transportation businesses to replace the manpower currently engaged in agricultural products' delivery.
3. Development of local arts and crafts. The *Qiang* women traditionally produced various kinds of crafts with strong cultural features. Tourist souvenirs based on traditional crafts can be developed and marketed in local markets or in Guan County. Tourist groups visiting Jiuzhaigou and Huangludong, the famous landmarks in Sichuan Province, usually stay overnight at the central town of Weizhou.
4. Efforts towards afforestation need to be vigorously pursued in order to maintain the ecological balance. Fuelwood requirements are currently met from local forests.
5. Markets are needed for apples and S-peppers, as future production is going to be much higher. Rural enterprises for the processing of fruits has considerable scope in Weizhou.

In addition, the following policies need to be considered.

1. The Central Government should pursue a policy to provide sufficient incentive to farmers to undertake off-farm activities. The local governments and townships or village organisations can play a more active role in infrastructural construction to spur on the development of off-farm activities. Existing extension and training programmes need to be improved.
2. Farmers' organisations should be promoted as a base for non-agricultural activities. Such organisations can be farmers' technological associations, credit cooperatives, marketing cooperatives, and information service centres.
3. As shown by the WCF case, the management of enterprises and the marketing system need to be improved. Employees' qualifications and competence should be raised through training programmes.

4. Bringing new business ideas to farmers enables them to develop new types of activity that are based on mountainous conditions so that they have the capacity to solve operational difficulties independently.